

As yet there are not even rumours; all is
tumult and like a camp.

Ever,

D.

In a speech in the course of the election campaign which followed, Disraeli declared that no one probably during the few preceding months had received more requisitions to become a candidate for Parliament than himself. Not only was Ashburton offered, but proposals came from Derby, Chichester, and Dartmouth, and also from his former friends in Marylebone and Taunton. It was all but arranged that he should stand for Barnstaple; but eventually an opening presented itself that proved more attractive than any of the others. The borough of Maidstone, then with two members, had been represented in the expiring Parliament by a Conservative and a Liberal, the Conservative being Wyndham Lewis, husband of the 'pretty little flirt and rattle' whom Disraeli had met at Bulwer's five years before. It was at first the intention of the local Conservatives to nominate Lewis only, but when they had completed the first day's canvass they found their position so much stronger than they had supposed that they despatched a deputation to the Carlton Club in quest of a second candidate, and the choice fell upon Disraeli.

To Sarah Disraeli.

Friday. [June
30.]

The clouds have at length dispelled, and my prospects seem as bright as the day. At six o'clock this evening I start for Maidstone with Wyndham Lewis, and I suppose by Wednesday I shall have completed my canvass. I doubt whether there will be a contest.¹

His address to the electors of Maidstone is worth preserving as a model of vigour in thought and terseness in expression.

I solicit your suffrages as an uncompromising
adherent of ¹ *Letters*, p. 114.